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NEXT ISSUE

- *The Tyrant meets His End—in the Story of Krishna*
- *The Country under a Company—in the Story of India*

The Exciting story of Moby Dick, Mighty Monarch who rules the Air—in Nature's Kingdom, all the regular features like Towards a Brighter Personality and Unsolved Mysteries

AND

A bunch of delightful stories!



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WE MARCH TOGETHER

Much of the World's problems and conflicts will end if people directed their minds at least to the pursuit of healthy joy, if not to higher goals. By higher goals we mean the pursuit of truth, efforts to find answers to basic questions such as the purpose of life, the way to perfection, etc.

Your magazine, *Chandamama*, is ever alert to help the readers in both the ways. It tries to bring them delight and it tries, humbly, to present to the young the light shed on the basic questions by great seekers of truth.

Let 1984 inspire us to march in the right direction more diligently and confidently.

CONTEST FOR JANUARY 1984

Have you heard any such folktale or fairytale in your area or anywhere else in India which you have not come across in print? Please narrate the tale in 150-250 words and mail it to the Editor, Chandamama (English), 188 Arcot Road, Madras 600 026, to reach us on or before 20th January '84. The winning entries will be suitably rewarded.

GOLDEN WORDS OF YORE

उद्यमेन हि सिध्यन्ति कार्याणि न मनोरथैः ।

नहि सुप्तस्य सिंहस्य प्रविशन्ति मुखे मृगाः ॥

Udyamena hi sidhyanti kāryāṇi na manorathaiḥ

Nahi suptasya siṃhasya praviśanti mukhe mṛgāḥ

What is necessary for achieving a goal is effort; mere desire does not help.
No prey will enter the mouth of a sleeping lion.

The Panchatantra.

THE KINDNESS THEY REMEMBER

Response to the contest, "The kindness you remember," was inspiring in the sense that so many people remembered with gratefulness gestures of kindness shown to them by others. The capacity to be grateful is among the finest of human qualities.

Here are the prize-winning entries. Since most of the entries were similar in the their themes, language and form became important elements in making the selection.

The Unusual Student

Even though immediately on my completion of M.Sc. in maths I secured a lecturer's post in a private college, I was forced to give it up and take to tutorship for a few students only, on my own, all because of my acute and chronic congenital asthma that started assuming atrocious proportions.

Since I specialized in teaching B.Sc. (Final) students only, for quite a few months, to my chagrin, I could not stumble upon any student. Once during one of those bad days, when I was sitting in a corner of a park, a simple and polite old man in his early sixties walked up to me. Much to my surprise, he expressed his keen desire to be coached for three months and offered me equivalent of three students' fees, though he mentioned that he had opted to do so for just the love of the 'grand lady of science'—Maths!

It was only after my fullblast three months' maths lessons to him, whereafter he left for his native place for good, that I learnt an amazing truth: He was a D.Sc. in Maths who had come to our city for a short sojourn, upon his retirement, with one of his old college pals!

Out of deep sympathy for me, he only wanted to infuse confidence in me in my new-fangled free-lancing in maths teaching! What a kind soul he was!

—J.S. Kesarwani, Nagpur.

The Unusual Professor

My last days in the medical college were very hard as my only financial source was a meagre scholarship. I was unable to pay my examination fees. That meant loss of one important year, discontinuation of scholarship, further financial hardship and perhaps giving up the course. My career (and life too!) was at stake. Driven to frustration I was thinking of even putting an end to my life! On the last day, as my heart was sinking in despair, I was called to the office. The clerk gave me an examination receipt. My fees had been paid by my professor. Tears rolled down my eyes. Silently I thanked him.

I passed with flying colours. Now I am well off in my profession.

The professor is thousands of miles away, well settled in U.S.A. but I always remember his kind gesture.

—Dr. V.S. Madgundi, Solapur.



NEWS-FLASH

The Shy Moon!

The Moon is slowly receding from Earth—appearing smaller century by century. There will be a time when total solar eclipse will be impossible. But that will be after a few billion years.



Men in A Cooking Pot

Did Cannibals put them there? No. They were sailing, of course without a sail!

Two Spaniards borrowed a huge cooking pot from a restaurant and sailed 230 kilometres down the river Ebro—just for the fun of it.



Napoleon's Ships

In the Summer of 1798 Britain's Admiral Nelson had sunk four ships of the French emperor, Napoleon Bonaparte in a battle off the Nile. They have been now spotted—8km off the Alexandrian coast—resting under water with their contents intact. Work has just started to salvage them.



LET US KNOW

What is Draconian law?

—Rohit Biswas, Darjeeling.

Draco was an Athenian judge of 7th century B.C. He drew a list of crimes and the punishments they deserved. The punishments set down by him were severe. Idleness could invite death! That is why any strict law is described as Draconian.



I was told that world's highest situated post office is in India. Is This true? Where is it?

—Sangeeta, Bangalore.

True. At Cheshul in Ladakh, the post office is situated at an altitude of 14 thousand feet.

Which one is the smallest among The States and Union Territories of India?

—Abdul Rahim, Aligarh.

Lakshadwip. This Union Territory is made up of 27 isles, big and small.

Why do some people call Bombay Mumbai?

—Bulbul, Cochin.

Mumbai is the original name of the place and Bombay is its anglicised form. Mumbai was derived from Amba Devi or Ma (Mother) Amba, the oldest deity of the place.

Krishna

By Manoj Doss

(Story so far: Krishna grows up under the loving care of his foster-parents Nanda and Yashoda at Brindavan. Kamsa, the demon-king of Mathura, who has learnt through a prophecy that he was to die in the hands of the incarnation of Vishnu, suspects Krishna to be his would-be destroyer. He sends several crafty agents to kill the boy, but none comes back alive!)

Dawn was breaking out. Quiet flowed the river Yamuna, overlooked by the castle of Kamsa, its ripples glistening in the tender hues from the eastern horizon. Birds had begun to flap their wings in the royal orchard behind the castle.

Kamsa was walking up and down his terrace. Not that he enjoyed the serene nature; it

was out of sheer disgust that he had left his bed that early. He had not been able to sleep.

Even if Nanda's son was not his foe of the prophecy, it was very uncomfortable to let the boy live. He finished off one after another the killers despatched by Kamsa. Who can say that, if allowed to grow up, the boy would not claim the





kingdom of Mathura? How can a mere kid prove so strong?

While Kamsa strolled worrying over these questions, suddenly the air was pervaded by a sweet melody. At first Kamsa thought that his own musicians were doing their duty to wake him up from sleep. But soon a luminous figure emerged from a floating cloud. It was Narada, the sage who shuttled between heaven and earth and who went on playing his Veena and chanting the name of Vishnu.

Although Kamsa did not like Narada's habit of singing the glory of Vishnu, the sage fascinated him. "Narada seems to

know a lot. I'll try to find out from him about this wonder-boy, Krishna," he decided.

Narada stopped singing and descended before Kamsa. "How are you, King Kamsa? As I was passing by I saw you strolling alone. Hope, all is fine with you!" Narada said acknowledging Kamsa's greetings.

"Narada, all is not well with me. You know about the ominous prophecy that hangs on my head like a curse. How can I be in peace?" Kamsa made a clean breast of his problem.

"You're yourself to blame for your state of mind. Why don't you put an end to your foe at once? Surely, a clever king like you ought to find out who the foe is!"

"Well," said Kamsa after a little hesitation, "I suspect a certain naughty boy...."

"Krishna of Brindavan. Am I right?" Narada asked and giggled meaningfully.

"You're right, O wise sage, but hadn't the prophecy said that it would be my cousin Devaki's son—her eighth issue? The fact, however, is, her eighth issue was a female child. It slipped off my hands when I tried to smash it to death. But,

escaping into the sky, it threatened me with a puzzling announcement. It said that in vain was I looking for my foe here; it was growing up elsewhere! Now, I don't understand how my foe can be elsewhere if it was to be born of Devaki. At the same time, taking stock of Krishna's activities, I should conclude that he is the foe!"

"I am not surprised over your confusion. It is all the play of Vishnu, you know! It is time you were told the facts!" Narada paused.

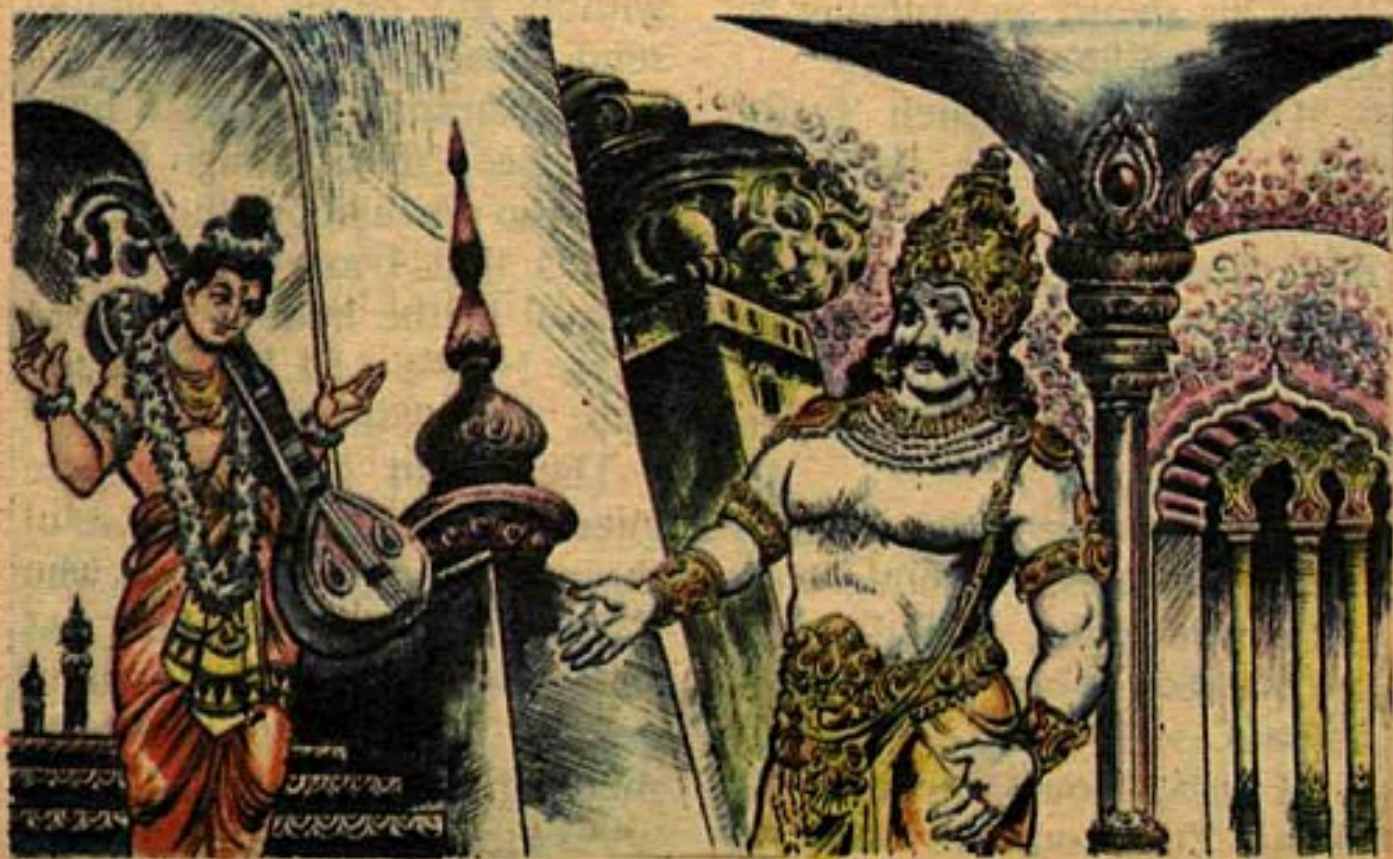
No doubt, it was time for Narada to tell Kamsa the facts. But is it because he wished the

tyrant to live longer or because he wished the tyrant to hasten his own destruction?

Such a question did not bother Kamsa. He was extremely eager to hear more from the sage.

"Devaki indeed gave birth to a male child. But her husband Vosudev carried the child overnight to Nanda's house and exchanged it with Nanda's newborn daughter. Do you realise now that the boy called Krishna is none other than your foe of the prophecy?"

"What! Was Vosudev capable of that mischief? How innocent he looks! I'll put him to death





forthwith!" shouted Kamsa grinding his teeth and unsheathing his sword and turning to climb down the terrace.

"Don't be in such futile haste!" said Narada, blocking Kamsa's way. "Vosudev has done what any father would do to protect his child. Your purpose will be served by killing Krishna, not him. Think of that."

Kamsa put the sword back in the sheath and stood thoughtful.

"You're right, Narada, but the question is how to do that!" he said.

"Kamsa, your approach is wrong. You send your killers to

Brindavan where Krishna proves stronger. Don't you think that the situation could be quite different if you met him here—on your own ground?" the sage asked with a twinkle in his eyes.

What an excellent idea! Kamsa almost jumped at it. Narada, sure that he had accomplished his mission, took leave of the tyrant.

Hurrying down to his court, Kamsa did two things at once. He ordered Vosudev and Devaki to be thrown into gaol. Secondly he summoned Akrura, a close relative.

"Proceed to Nanda's house without any delay. Ask him to send those two boys, Krishna and Balarama, to me. I have never seen them though I have heard so much about them. Tell Nanda that I am organising a festival in the honour of those boys. Nanda and his wife too must come," he told Akrura.

The tyrant could not have guessed that Akrura was one of those few people who knew who Krishna really was. He was thrilled. Nothing could mean a greater pleasure to him than meeting Krishna.

Akrura left for Brindavan

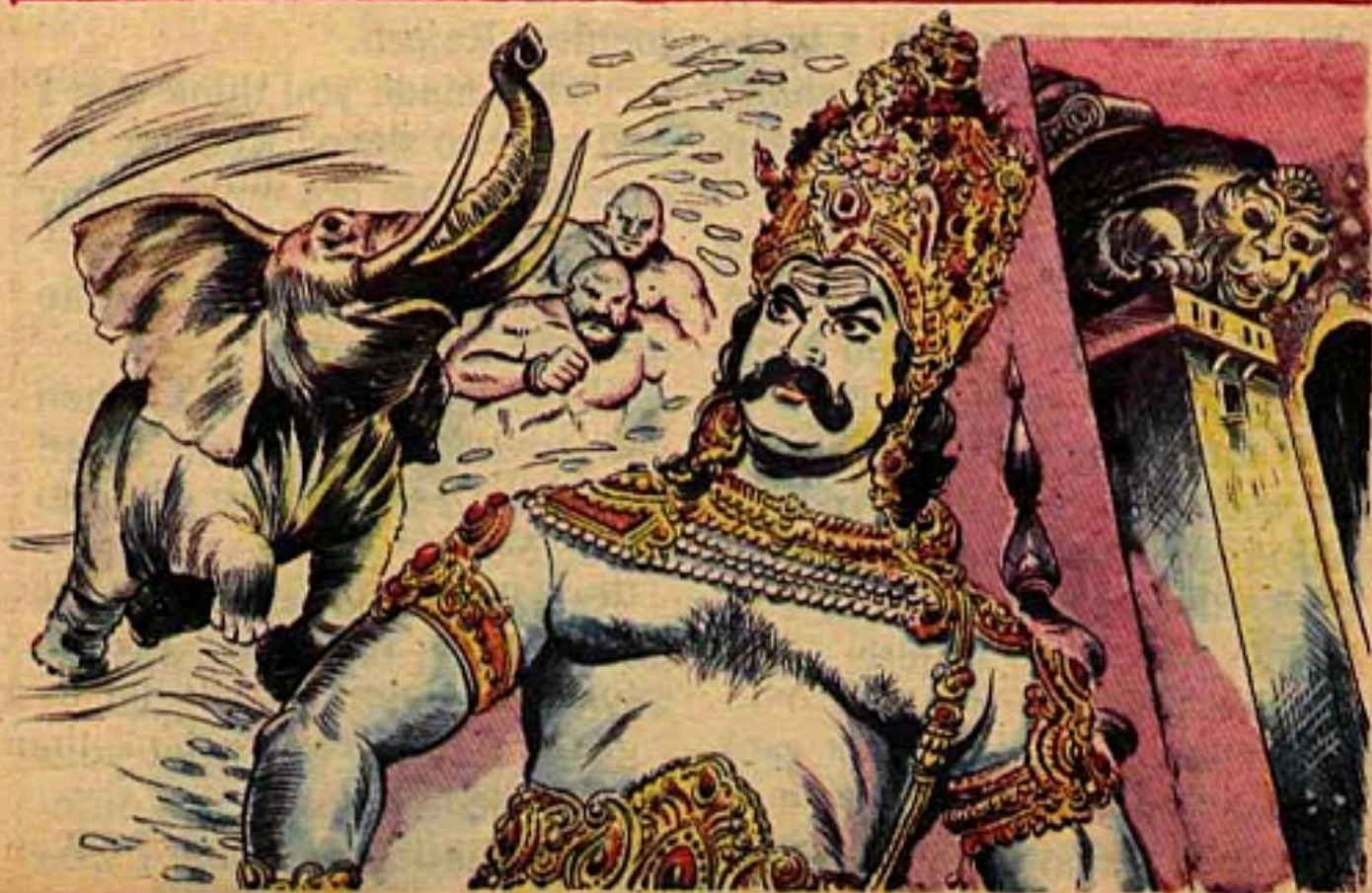
while preparations for the festival began at Mathura.

"What a wise chap this Narda is! But for him I'd still be worrying about my impending doom! Now, Krishna, at last your end is round the corner. You were born only the other day, but it seems you have caused me anguish for ages!" Kamsa told himself.

Since the time of the dreaded prophecy that was made during Devaki's marriage, Kamsa had never looked happy. But now his mood changed. He smiled as he planned with his ministers. He was taking no chances. A

dangerous elephant and its mahout notorious for trampling people to death were kept ready to confront the young visitors. In case they escaped, they were to be challenged by two demon-wrestlers to a combat. Although there was no question of the boys surviving these deadly foes, Kamsa chose his ablest soldiers to remain with him as his bodyguards. They were to pounce upon the boys at a hint from him.

Last but not the least, Kamsa himself would remain alert and armed to teeth to end the adventure of the boys—if it went too long!





Towards a Brighter Personality

TROUBLE WITH IMAGINARY TROUBLES

minutes later Rajesh returned and was heard whispering to the servant who had brought tea for Grandpa, "I think Grandpa is having a snooze. Take away the tea. I'll call you when he opens his eyes."

"Look, my eyes are fully open," Prof. Chowdhry sat up straight.

"Good you woke up before your tea cooled down," commented Rajesh.

"What made you think that I had gone to sleep? Keeping the eyes shut does not mean falling asleep!"

"It does not, but I bet you're asleep!"

"I bet I wasn't! In fact, when you advised your friend to go and study, I was almost going to shout No!"

Rajesh's face showed surprise. "Why, Grandpa, was my advice wrong?"

"No, Rajesh, but what your friend needed most was a different inspiration. No doubt, you

Rajesh and his friend Vir were walking up and down the terrace. Grandpa Chowdhury, relaxing in an easy chair, seemed to have fallen asleep while reading a book.

"Rajesh, I've not been able to sleep last night thinking of the viva voce. I have studied thoroughly, but if they ask a question that is beyond me, I shall cut such a sorry figure! And if I fail in this oral examination, all my studies would have gone in vain!" Vir told Rajesh in a pensive tone.

"Better go and study," said Rajesh sympathetically.

Both went away. A few mi-

advised him to go and study out of sympathy and goodwill. But such an advice will only make him more panicky. He says that he has studied his subject thoroughly. Yet he fears that he might fail to answer a question. What he needs is self-confidence, no more study. The pity is, no amount of study can help him unless he changes his mood—from one of despondency to one of confidence and cheerfulness.

"How can he get over his fear?" Rajesh asked anxiously.

"Let him tell himself: I have studied the subject. Those who will ask me questions are not my enemies. I'll be as calm as possible and try to answer them."

"What if he cannot answer a question?"

"Instead of feeling fidgety, he ought to frankly say that he does

not know the answer! Often an honest confession of one's ignorance is better than an attempt at guessing without a basis. The interviewer may be impressed by a candidate's honesty, but never by his pretention."

"I see. But if he fails, all his study will...."

Your friend has imaginary fears. First, the questions he will be asked may be within his grasp. Secondly, even if they are not, the benefits of what he has studied are not lost to him. They will be with him. In any case, anxiety is not going to help him. Here is a line from Mark Twain."

Grandpa drew Rajesh's attention to these words: "I am an old man and have known a great many troubles, but most of them never happened."



THE SMART BOSS

The office had a new boss. "I will have no excuse from any idler or go-slower!" he announced thrice within his very first hour in the office.

Ten minutes after the lunch-break he stormed out of his cabin and asked an elderly man who was standing in the corridor chewing a betel.

"Look here, man, what's your salary?" asked the boss.

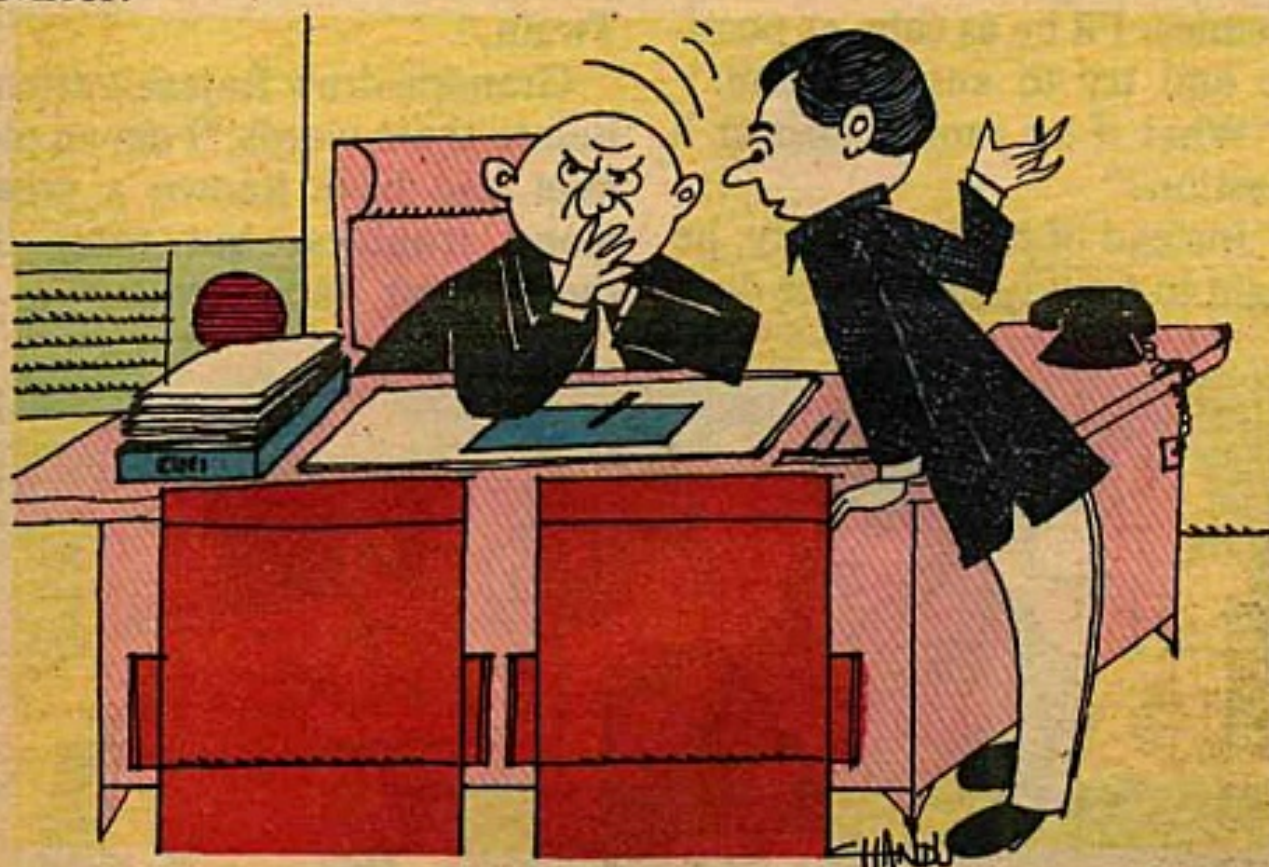
"Only two hundred fifty rupees, Sir," replied the man.

"Now, here's the salary for a month. Now, begone," said the boss, holding open the door.

The man gave a salute and left.

"I wanted to set an example. Ten minutes past lunch hour and still he is loitering in the corridor!" the boss, back in his cabin, told his deputy with a proud smile.

"Excuse me, sir, but he was a messenger from another office. He was waiting to carry a reply from ours!" informed the deputy officer.



MOBY-DICK

(Ishmael has shipped aboard the Pequod, a whaling ship, with Queequeg, a half wild savage turned harpooner. Their captain is named Ahab, and Ishmael has already learned that he lost his leg to a gigantic sperm whale, which has soured his nature).

"I am not the captain," he said, "Captain Ahab is the master of this ship. But I have no doubt he will be glad to have you aboard." Upon hearing this we went quickly up the gangplank, where the gentleman who had told us to come aboard immediately took us to one side. "First, I must warn you about Captain Ahab," he said.



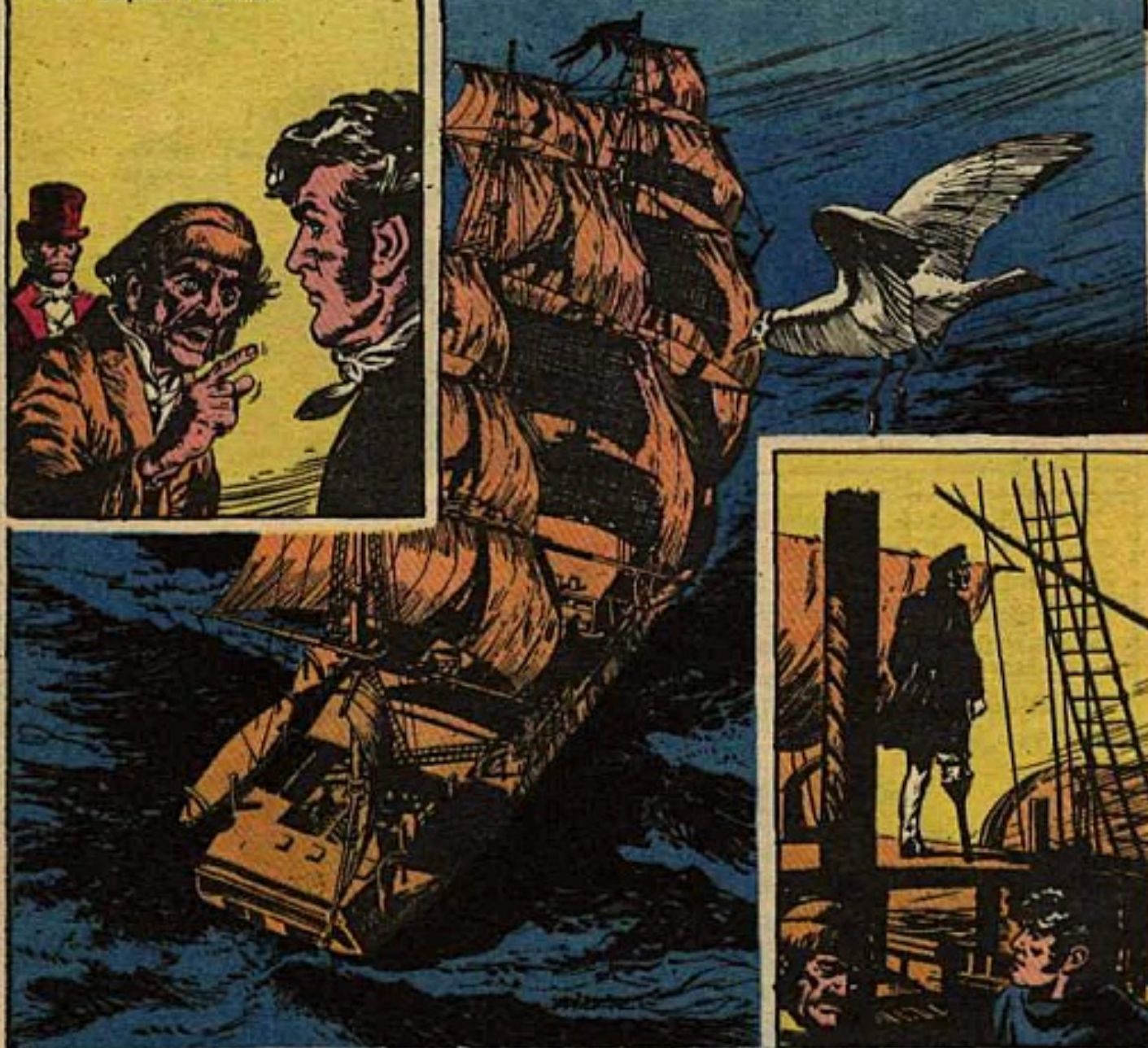
"Captain Ahab is a stern master," the sailor said. "His temper has not been improved by the fact that he lost a leg to the most terrible sperm whale that ever stove a boat. If you still wish to sail with us, you may. But do not say afterwards I did not give you fair warning."



The sailor introduced himself as Starbuck, the mate, who took us below to sign our articles before taking us to our quarters. As we were not due to sail until the following morning, Queequeg and I decided to explore Nantucket. No sooner had we left the ship than we were approached by a wild eyed man who was shabbily dressed. "Have you shipped aboard the Pequod?" he asked.

"We have," I told him. "Only minutes ago we signed the articles." "Check on your articles," the stranger said. "And see if there is anything about your souls in them. For you will surely lose them if you sail with Captain Ahab!"

Shaking the stranger off as a madman, we left him and spent most of the day walking around Nantucket. In the evening we returned to the ship, and I turned in early. The next morning we set sail. There was a cold, damp breeze blowing, and a screaming gull followed us until we were well into the Atlantic.



For several days after leaving Nantucket, nothing was seen of Captain Ahab. Then one morning, he suddenly appeared briefly on the upper deck. He was a grim, forbidding looking figure, and obviously a man to be feared. I had not known the terrors that lay in store for us under his command.

Although I saw Captain Ahab frequently, he had little to say to any of us until that fateful day when he ordered Starbuck to summon the ship's company aft. When the whole crew stood before him he cried: "What do you do when you see a whale, men?" "Sing out for him. Then lower away and after him," the crew cried in unison.



"Listen well, now," Ahab said. "Who raises me a white whale with a wrinkled brow and three holes punctured in his starboard fluke, shall have this sixteen dollar gold piece." Then he nailed it to the mast.



"Would that white whale be Moby Dick, that took off your leg?" Starbuck asked quietly. "Aye, Starbuck," Ahab shouted. "It's Moby Dick we're going to chase." He was interrupted by a cry from the look out, who had stayed at his post while we had all listened to Ahab. "There she blows! A school of them!"





At this critical instant a sudden exclamation was heard that took every eye from the whales. With a start, all turned to stare at five dusty natives who seemed to have appeared out of the air, as if fresh formed like phantoms.

They were, I learned later, natives of the Manillas, a race which many mariners supposed to be agents of the devil. I could only suppose Ahab had secretly shipped them aboard, because, in his half crazed mind, he imagined they had some powers that would help him to destroy Moby Dick. I had no time for further thought then, for the boats were already being lowered.



In a few minutes our four boats were in keen pursuit. Soon the boats began to pull apart, Starbuck giving chase to three whales running dead to leeward. It was then that the weather changed like magic. The strong wind increased into a wild squall which whipped the waters into a boiling maelstrom. —To continue

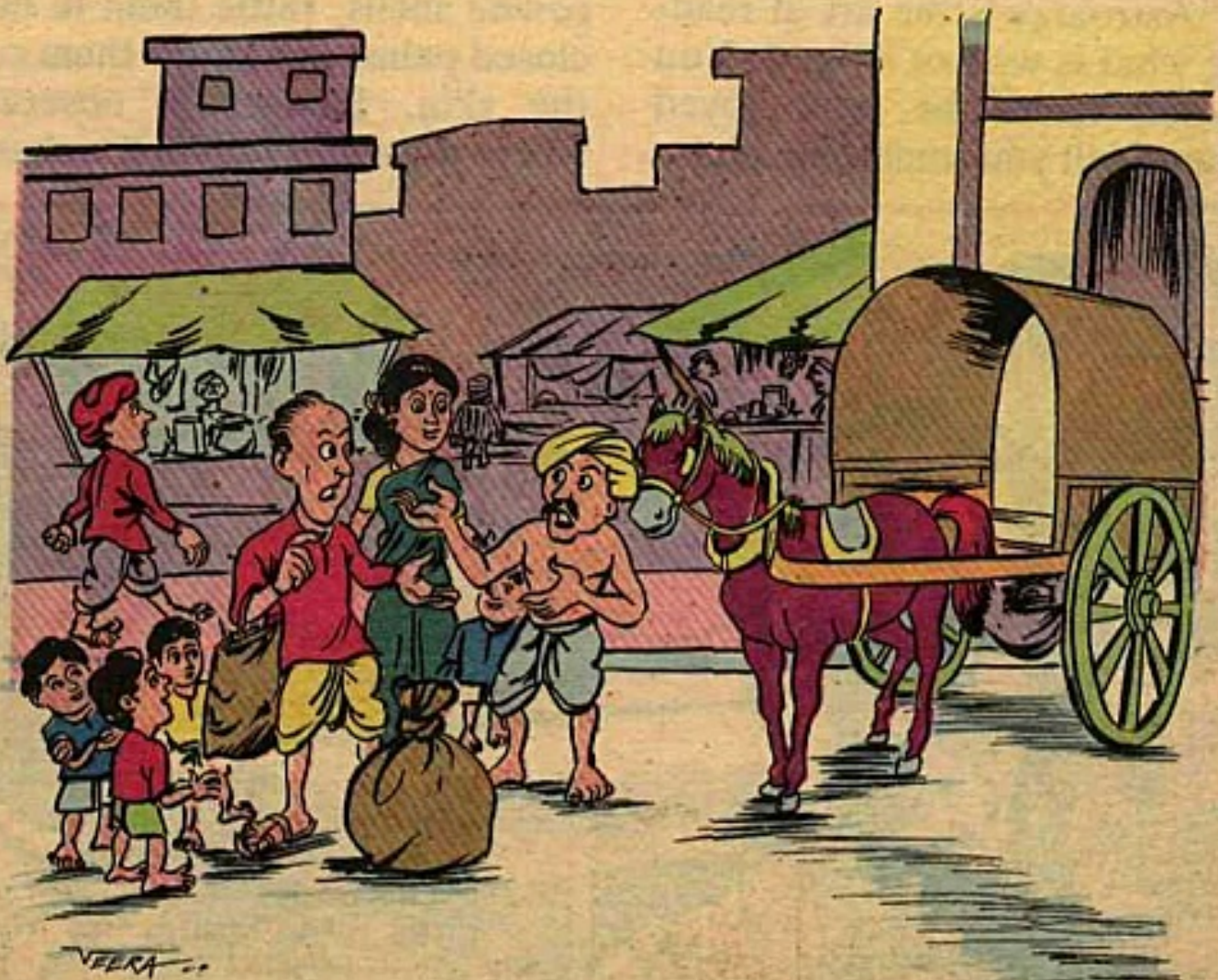
JUMP IN, KIDS!

The peasant couple and their four children had been to the bazar. It was evening when they finished buying things. They had begun walking towards their village when they saw the coachman who belonged to their village. He was returning after leaving his passenger in the bazar with his horse-drawn coach empty.

"Hey, brother, how much will you charge for taking us in your carriage?" asked the peasant.

"One rupee for you and your wife. I am prepared to give a free lift to your kids and your bag and your sack," said the coachman.

The peasant turned to his children, "Jump in, kids, and carry the bag and sack with you. Your mother and I can walk!"



The Prince's Destiny

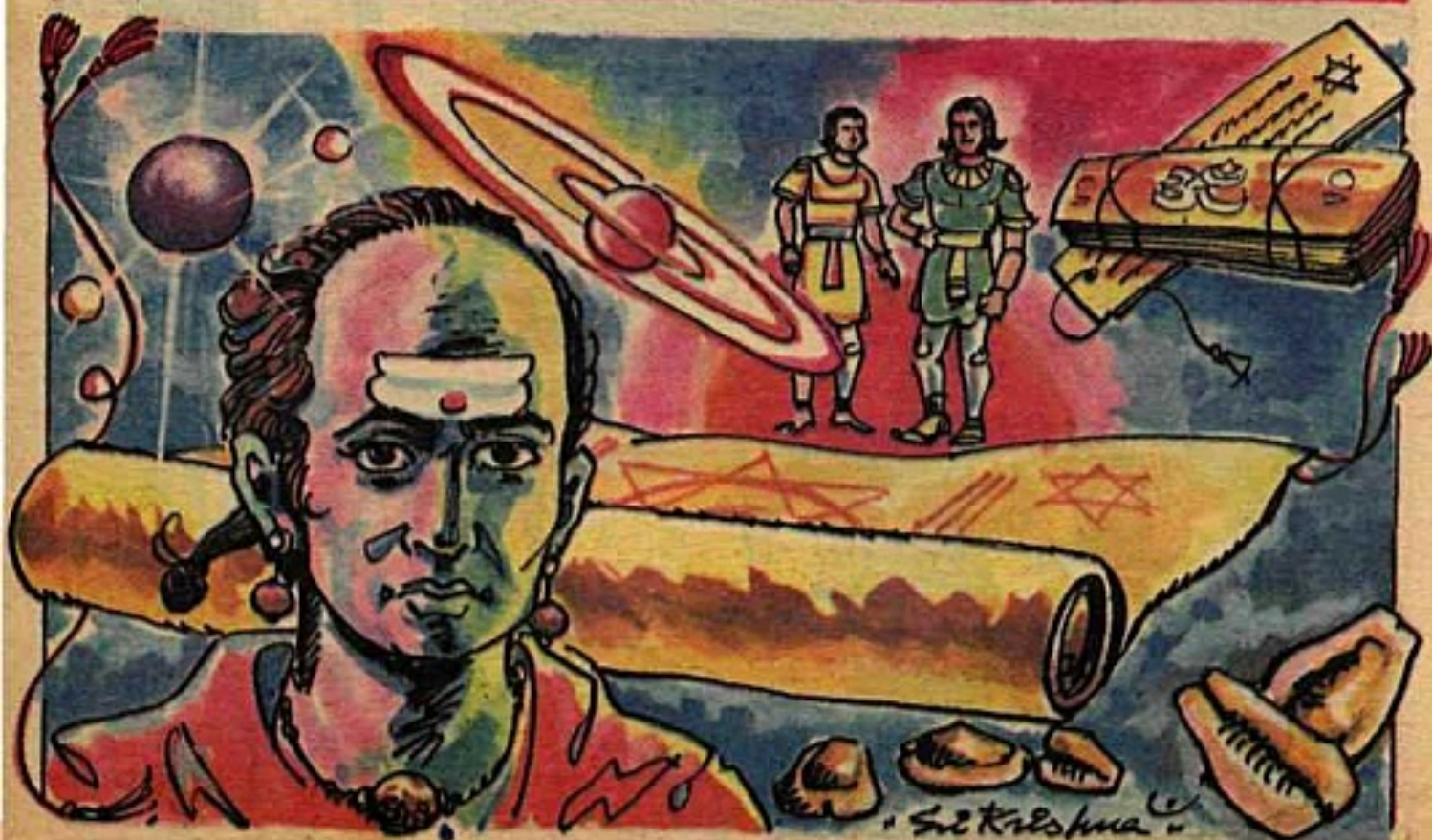
Long long ago there lived an astrologer. He was a master in the study of stars and he knew what was going to happen to everyone, including himself.

Hundreds of people from various villages flocked to consult him. The astrologer spoke about their past, present and future quite fluently.

"Astrology is the art of reading what is written by god. You should never be over joyed when I tell you something pleas-

ing. And if you feel that there is something unpleasant in my words, you should never be disheartened. Never should you forget that life is full of good and evil." That was how he began to speak to his clients, when the fee was paid.

Then he would unroll a square piece of skin with some charts on it, take half-a-dozen *cowrie* shells, rattle them in his closed palms and throw them on the skin. He would observe where the shells fell on the chart



and do some some calculations muttering to himself. His clients sat spellbound till he finished.

The astrologer's fame spread far and wide. The king came to hear of his scholarship and appointed him the court-astrologer. Whenever there was a problem, the king and his minister called upon the astrologer. He foresaw the shape of things for them and put them on their guard.

One day he was summoned by the king to read the future of his new-born son. The astrologer was getting ready to go to the palace. Just then a cobbler arrived to deliver a pair of sandals the astrologer had ear-

lier ordered for.

"I'm going to the palace. Leave the sandals inside. I'll pay you later," said the astrologer.

"Sir!" interrupted the cobbler. "That is all right. But today my wife gave birth to a son. Will you please spare a few minutes to read his future? You won't have to pay for your sandals."

The astrologer spread a mat on the floor and sat down on it. He then took out the chart and *cowrie* shells. After the calculation, he said: "Your son will be a king."

The cobbler was amazed. The astrologer continued, "Yes, what I predict will come true.





Your son's stars tell me that he is destined to be known as a king at least for a few hours...." He rolled up his mat, tucked it under his armpit and left for the palace.

The cobbler giggled and said to himself: "The astrologer, in his hurry, speaks like a madcap. Son of a cobbler is to be a king!"

When the astrologer reached the palace, the king and his minister welcomed him and led him into the queen's chamber where he saw the new-born babe.

The astrologer studied the various places the *cowrie* shells fell on the chart and after a

couple of minutes of calculation, said "My Lord! The stars tell me that the prince has an excellent future, but he is also destined to be a beggar before he is ten!"

"Absurd!" shouted the queen.

"Yes, your majesty," he proceeded. "Life is a wheel and one can't entirely escape ill-luck however lucky one may be. The prince is destined to beg at least for a while."

The king's face became red. For a minute he lost control over himself and commanded his guards, "Throw this astrologer into prison. His tongue deserves to be taught a lesson. My son will be a beggar, eh? What audacity!"

"I knew, my lord, what will be the reward for my prophecy. But what is written in fate cannot be erased. I am destined to be behind the bars for some years. There is no escape from it," said the astrologer and the guards led him to the prison.

From that day the royal couple began to take extra care of their son and they were over-cautious in their deeds. The king invaded many countries, conquered and brought them under his control. He levied tax

after tax on the conquered states and collected enough wealth in the royal treasury, so that his son would not be forced to beg. He allowed his son to play with all children, regardless of their parents' status, so that all would become his friends.

Years passed. The prince had grown up to be a jolly boy of nine. His companions were from all sections of the society. The cobbler's son was very close to him.

One day the public announcer beat his tom-tom and announced the place and time of a drama. He invited everyone to attend it.

Commoners and courtiers

thronged to see the drama. On the special request of their son who was also acting, the king and the queen too went to witness the play.

"What role is our son playing in the drama?" the king asked the queen.

"I don't know," said the queen. He told me that he would play a major role and we may try to identify him."

The drama was about to begin. The clown appeared and welcomed the audience. He requested them to identify the players and name them as they see the drama.

The drama began. The player-king on the throne was seen



holding counsel with his ministers.

The king presumed that the player-king was his son. He was about to say, "The king is my son." But he stopped when he heard a voice from the audience, "My son is the king."

"Yes! Yes! The king is none other than the cobbler's son," many agreed with the cobbler.

The drama went on. It was about a tyrant who learned wisdom from a beggar and later became a saint.

The audience was able to identify all the players. But the beggar was so perfectly disguised that none could identify him till the end of the drama.

When the drama was over, all the players including those who had lost their lives under the rule of the tyrant stood in a row before the audience.

The audience applauded and then asked in unison, "Who acted the beggar?"

The clown laughed and said, "He who can never be a beggar.... the prince!"

"This was in the boy's destiny," said the amused king. "I must thank God that our son became a beggar only in the play. The astrologer must be rewarded and honoured. I must apologise to him too!"

The king hurried to the prison.

—Retold by P.Raja.



The Honest Opium—Eater

Abu was a good man, but he was an opium-eater.

"My husband, all your honesty and virtues will prove meaningless unless you give up the habit of taking opium," Abu's wife told him time and again, but her advice made no effect on Abu. "I'll give up the habit soon," he would say with a smile and that was all he did. He never gave up his bad habit.

One day Abu was on his way to a market to sell a cow. At the

roadside he found a tavern that sold opium. "I'll sell the cow for a good deal of money. There is no reason why I should not enjoy a little opium now," he said to himself and sat down and took the stuff.

When he left the tavern, he found himself unable to walk steady. He sat down under a tree and thought, "Some customer will surely pass this way and I can sell my cow to him."

No customer approached



him. The sun was going to set. Suddenly Abu heard a crow cawing. In his dazed condition he took it to be someone's query about his cow.

"You take it and pay me the price at my home. Just now I am in no position to count money," he said with a kind wave of his hand. Then he stood up and toddled towards his home.

"How much did you receive?" his wife asked him.

"I'm yet to receive anything. The gentleman who bought my cow will pay the bill tomorrow," Abu informed the lady.

He was sober by morning. The day grew, but no one came

with any money. Abu's wife grew suspicious. "I hope you know the gentleman who took the cow from you!" she said.

"At least I know the place where I handed it over to him. I'll locate him soon."

Abu went out in the direction of the tree. But he could not have avoided the tavern on the way! He had a dose of opium and soon the world appeared very different to him. Reaching the tree he heard the crow cawing again.

"You won't have to apologise for the delay. It'll be all right if you pay me now," he said looking at the crow.



The crow flew off and sat down on a mound of earth. Abu headed towards the mound. The crow took off again and sat down on a broken earthen jar lying near a bush at a deserted place.

Abu was there soon. The crow cawed again and flew away and disappeared from Abu's vision.

"What did you say? The money is here? All right, let me see." Abu upturned the broken jar and was happy to see a lot of silver coins inside it. He took only the amount that was the cow's value and returned home.

"It is surprising that a man whom you hardly knew was honest enough to pay you," his wife commented.

"If he was honest, I was no different. I too took from his deposit only what was the value of the cow," said Abu.

His wife grew curious. She asked him and found out how he got the money. In the evening she went to the deserted place and found the jar and brought home all the money that it contained.

Abu came to know of it. "It is bad to possess someone else's money!" he told his wife sternly.



"I'll make good use of the money. Surely, I propose to improve our lot, but also I'll help my poor neighbours with it," she explained.

"No, no, no. You must carry the money back and leave it where it lay!"

"Only to be found out by someone else? I'll not be that foolish!" she spoke adamantly.

"In that case, my dear wife, I must report to the police when it is morning." Abu announced his decision and went to bed after a dose of opium.

At midnight Abu was woken up by his wife.

"What's the matter?" asked

Abu.

"There was a shower of flowers! How strange!"

Abu came out of his room and looked at the courtyard. Indeed, there was water all over and there were flowers too!

He marvelled at the strange rain and fell asleep again.

In the morning, true to his announcement, Abu went to the police chief and reported the case with his plea: "You may forfeit the money; but kindly do not harass my foolish wife!"

But the police led the lady to the Kazi though they did not find any money in Abu's house.

"My lord, my husband

dreams of queer things and thinks them to be true," the lady said.

The Kazi looked at Abu and asked, "When did your wife go to get the money?"

"In the evening, my lord. Please take pity on her. She must have been scared when I told her that I'll report to the police. She could not sleep at night and woke me up when it rained flowers!" Abu stated.

"Rained what?" the Kazi queried.

"I'm speaking of the queer happening of the last night. Did it not rain flowers along with water?"



The Kazi and all those present there burst into a big laugh. "I'm sorry for this good lady. I can understand how hard it would be for her to live with such a mad dreamer. Keep the fellow in confinement and let a physician attend upon him," said the Kazi.

Abu was thrown into a solitary chamber. He went without opium for several days. His wife met him and said, "If you wish to get back your freedom, tell them that it never rained flowers!"

Next day she met the Kazi and said, "My lord, my husband is cured of his funny nature.

You may graciously set him free."

Abu was brought before the Kazi.

"It rained what?" asked the Kazi.

"My lord, I'm afraid, it never rained that night. It must be my wife.."

He wanted to say that his wife must have splashed water and scattered flowers on their courtyard. But before he had said so, the Kazi laughed and said, "Yes, it is your wife who appealed for your release. Go home and live sensibly!"

Abu gave up the habit of opium-eating.



NATURE'S KINGDOM

TOUGH GUY OF THE FOREST

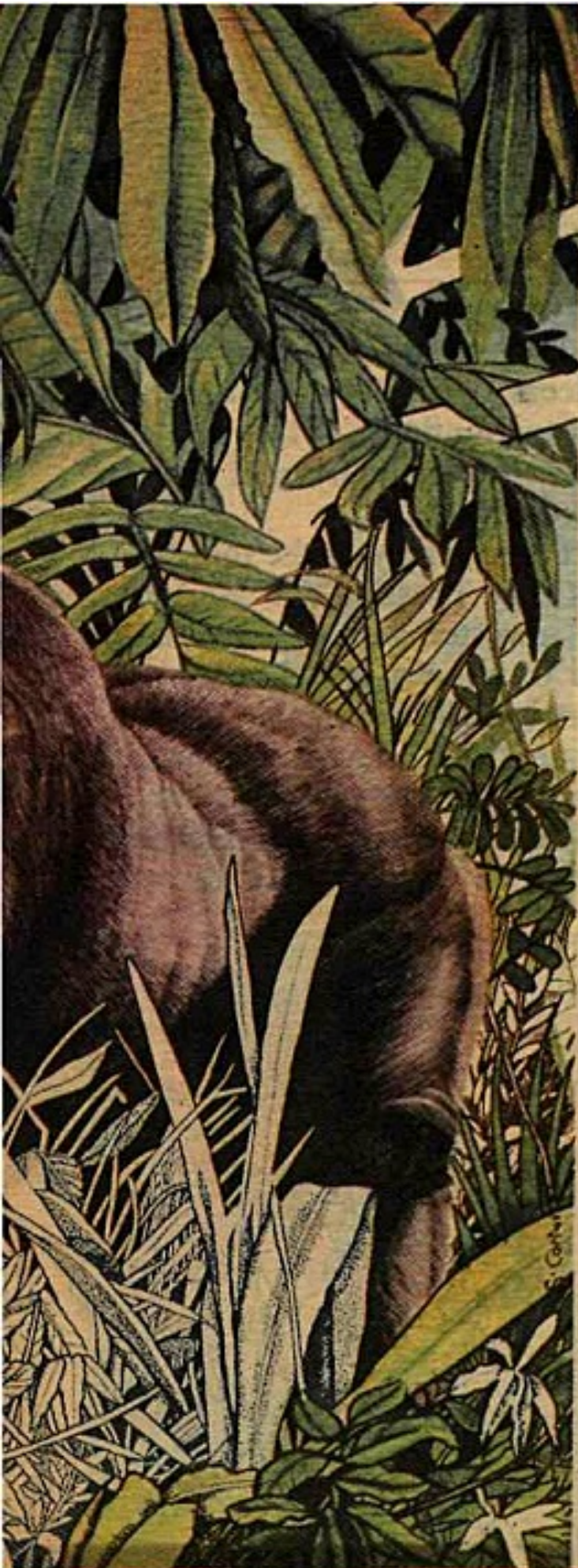
The gorilla looks fierce and unfriendly but most of the time it is a gentle giant that lives on a diet of shoots and fruit.

Deep in the great, gloomy African forests lives the mighty gaint of the ape tribe—the gigantic gorilla.

Twice as heavy as an average man and equally as tall, with arms that can span nearly three metres, the massive gorilla looks so terrifying that lions and leopards keep away from it.

Especially fearsome is its terrifying habit of drumming its chest with both hands, as if preparing for a devastating attack, and giving out a terrific roar.





Yet nothing could be more deceptive. Although it looks extremely fierce, a gorilla is not naturally aggressive.

It does not prey on other animals but feeds on shoots and fruit.

However, when it is attacked or angered, a gorilla may become as dangerous as it looks.

Gorillas live in the heart of dense forests where the branches of the tall trees are so entangled overhead as to form a thick, green roof which shuts out from the ground below almost every ray of sunlight.

The gorilla thrives in the intense heat and perpetual twilight which are created by these conditions.

It usually walks about on all fours with its fingers doubled up so as to rest the weight on its knuckles. And when it does attempt to walk upright, the gorilla helps itself along by holding on with one of its long arms to the branches above its head.

Gorillas never remain long at one place, for they lead a kind of gypsy life, wandering through the forest from year's end to year's end.

They go about in small bands. These are really family parties consisting of one old male with its mates and young.

Search For Food

There are usually two or three females with a troop of youngsters of all ages and sizes.

In the daytime, the whole family roams about searching for wild fruits, berries and nuts. They enjoy the young green shoots found on forest trees.

Although they do not hunt other animals for food, they often catch and kill them for sport. They take eggs out of nests, and they also crunch up with their strong teeth all the insects they can find.

Young gorillas are very lively and noisy. They play in the trees, chasing one another through the leafy tangels and swinging from bough to bough by their long arms.

At night, all the family sleeps in the trees with the father sleeping at the foot of one, ever ready to awaken and spring to his family's protection at the slightest hint of danger.

IN GRATITUDE

There was a young king who had an old minister. The minister's conduct always appeared queer to the king. But the king retained him. It was because the minister used to be a favourite of the young king's father, the late king. Also, the young king always felt that though the minister looked very grave and spoke little, he had nothing in his mind but the king's welfare.

One day the king called the minister and said, "The people

of Haripur are not paying any tax for last two years. I sent my officers twice. They came back empty-handed. Will you go yourself personally and collect the tax?"

"I'll go," agreed the minister.

Ready to start for Haripur, the minister saw that the king had ordered a battalion of soldiers to follow him. He did not say anything about it, but he did not look quite pleased.

The minister reached Haripur after two days. It was an area



cut off from the rest of the kingdom. There were hills on three sides of Haripur. Beyond the hills there was a wide forest. Haripur was the frontier of the kingdom.

When the people saw the soldiers coming towards their locality, they fled to the hills and the forest. The minister observed that because of drought there was no crop in the fields. The people lived on fruit, leaves and roots gathered from the forest. The old men and women who had not run away told their woes to the minister.

"Go and call back your people. They need not have any fear. The soldiers are with me as

my bodyguards because I had to come a long way. They are not here to harm anybody," said the minister.

The old folks went and brought the others back. They came with the sheets of paper which the tax-collectors had handed over to them. The papers mentioned the amounts each family was required to pay.

"My friends," said the minister. "Our king is not inhuman. He loves you. On his behalf I declare that you need not pay any tax for the last two years—or for the next year—even if your lands yield a good crop this season."

The minister then collected



the papers from the people and burnt them. The people raised joyous shouts praising their king.

The minister was back at the capital after a week. He was looking quite happy, though tired.

"Did you collect the taxes?" asked the hopeful king.

"I collected something much more precious," replied the minister.

"What is it?" the king became curious.

"The gratitude of the people of Haripur," said the minister.

The king did not realise the value of the minister's reply. The minister found no chance to explain to the king, for the old man took ill and died in a few days.

But the king had reasons to remember the minister—with tears of love and respect—after six months. His capital was suddenly attacked by a powerful enemy. The invaders were keen to kill him. He escaped in time. Situation obliged him to flee to the frontier—Haripur. And what love and devotion awaited him there! The people of Haripur took a vow to protect him till the last drop of their blood had been shed. They had hundred safe places to hide their king—in caves and the forest.

The king's allies came to his rescue soon. The enemy was driven away. The king returned to his capital. He raised a monument to the memory of his minister and wrote on it: "In Gratitude."



THE DEMON'S DILEMMA

Dark was the night and weird the atmosphere. It rained from time to time. Howls of jackals and screams of hyenas were interspersed with eerie laughter of ghosts. Flashes of lightning showed fearful faces.

But King Vikram swerved not. He climbed the ancient tree once again and brought the corpse down. However, as soon as he began crossing the desolate cremation ground with the corpse lying on his shoulder, the vampire that possessed the corpse said, "O King, it is obvious that you are not very fond of your life. Otherwise you won't take such risks. Let me narrate a story to you in this regard. Pay attention to it. That might bring you some relief."

The vampire went on: Ratnakar was a young man who had his education in the holy city of Kashi. At the completion of his study he was returning to his home state that was far away





when he strayed into a forest.

The forest was infested by deadly beasts. But Ratnakar was lucky. He was seen by a hermit who took him to his hut and gave him shelter there.

Soon Ratnakar realised that the hermit had the power to perform miracles. Ratnakar decided to please the hermit so that the hermit would be pleased to pass on some of his secrets to him. He stayed on in the forest and served the hermit sincerely.

A month passed. One day Ratnakar told the hermit, "O holy man, you can perform strange deeds. You get food

from nowhere. Tigers and lions behave towards you like your pets. Won't you kindly pass on some secrets to me so that I too could do such miracles?"

The hermit smiled and kept quiet.

Ratnakar did not lose hope. He waited for two more months and repeated his appeal to the hermit. But the hermit said nothing.

That disappointed the young man thoroughly. While the hermit sat in meditation, Ratnakar began to hurl abuses at him. His nasty scream woke up the hermit who looked angrily at him.

Next moment Ratnakar felt an uneasy change coming over him. He was growing bigger and uglier. He ran to the brink of a lake and saw his reflection on the water. He realised that he had become a demon.

He returned to the hermit and fell at his feet, crying, "How could this become of me?"

"My son, you behaved like a demon while I was in deep meditation. That is why you became a demon. What can I do?" said the hermit.

"O holy man, it is true that my own misconduct reduced me to this condition. I had no true

love or dedication for you. I was here simply for satisfying my desire. But, please tell me, how am I to come out of this curse?" Ratnakar asked with deep anguish.

"You'll recover your human-self the moment you do something noble," said the hermit.

Ratnakar went away and lived in a cave. He found it very difficult to get food for himself. Whatever fruit he could find were not enough to satisfy his hunger. He was not able to eat raw animals.

He almost starved for days. One morning he told himself, "I will go out presently and eat up any creature I find!"

On coming out of his cave he saw a young man passing through the forest.

"Excellent! You'll be my food!" he shouted.

The young man who was very brave at once unsheathed his sword and was ready to defend himself. In fact he looked quite happy at meeting a demon.

"You seem to be quite courageous!" commented the demon.

"Why should I enter the forest in search of adventure if I had no courage?"



"Pity!" said the demon.

"What's the matter?" asked the young man.

"The pity is, I'm extremely hungry. But I won't like to eat a brave lad like you. Besides I may not prove strong enough to vanquish you," confessed the demon.

"What do you mean? Are you not a demon?" queried the surprised young man.

Ratnakar narrated the incident that led him to become a demon. Then he asked, "Can you tell me where to find a coward?"

The young man laughed and said, "Luckily for you, the



world abounds in cowards. You won't meet them here, because those who enter the forest are brave. But go to the town or the villages; you'll see cowards everywhere."

They parted. The demon reached the nearest village. It was evening. He saw a lean and thin man outside the village and got ready to pounce on him.

But, to his great surprise, the young man did not look scared at all. "Who are you that you are not afraid of a demon?" asked Ratnakar.

"I am Harihar—the poorest man in this village. I was desiring that a tiger or a demon

should emerge from the forest and put an end to my life. I am without food for last two days!"

"Pity! This means you're not afraid of death. Well, I can't possibly kill one who is not afraid of death. Don't you have any one in this village who fears death?"

"There is Dulal Chowdhury who shivers at the very mention of death. That is why he is spending all he can to be cured of his illness," said Harihar.

Ratnakar reached Dulal Chowdhury in a few bounds. Dulal, reclining in his bed, at once said, "Come, my friend, come. I'm fed up with life. No quantity of medicine seems to be effective on me. I was just praying for the God of Death to send his messenger and you are here!"

"Pity! You are ready to die. I've nothing to do with you. Is there nobody in your village who is afraid of death?" asked Ratnakar who was hungry beyond toleration.

"The answer to your question is Mahindra, the physician. He is giving me mild or fake medicines so that I'll suffer longer and continue to pay him his fees. Is he not doing so because

of his lust for life?"

"Right. He will be my food," said the demon and he reached Mahindra's house.

Mahindra was in a very bad state of mind. He had changed his life's saving into gold and had buried it. His gold had been stolen. He looked at the demon vacantly and said, "If all my life's saving is gone, what is the use of my life itself? I'm ready to die. Please eat me as soon as you can."

Said the demon, "I cannot eat a man who has no desire to live. I wonder if there is someone who is blindly attached to his life."

"The money-lender of our village is such a man. He is a miser beyond description. He goes on hoarding money. Is it not because he is extremely attached to life?"

The demon thought that at last he had someone to serve him as his food. He appeared before the money-lender and said, "Get ready for death. Pray to your deity."

"Demon, Sir! Please give me a day's time. A client is to return me my ten thousand rupees tomorrow, with interest. If I am not there, he would



never return the amount," said the money-lender pleadingly.

"What's the benefit in your recovering the money if you know that you'll die tomorrow?"

The money-lender had no answer to this question.

Suddenly Ratnakar remembered the condition that he will get back his human form if he did something noble. He told the money-lender, "Well, I won't eat you if you give money to make a charitable dispensary and a temple."

"No, no, no, no. I won't waste my money," said the money-lender, shaking his head



vehemently.

"Then I'll eat you!"

"You may, but I must safeguard my money."

"Don't you have any love for life?" asked the surprised Ratnakar.

"I don't know. But I love money," the money-lender said frankly.

"Pity. I know I won't get the food fit for me," muttered Ratnakar with a sigh. He left the village.

Outside the village his eyes fell on the young Harihar, the poorest man.

To the demon's surprise, Harihar ran away. Ratnakar

caught up with him.

"O demon, please don't kill me. I want to live, because Dulal Chowdhury has just decided to adopt me as his son. I'll inherit his property," said Harihar.

The demon went to Dulal to find out if what Harihar said was true. Said Dulal, "Brother demon, I'm much better today. The physician at last gave the right medicine last night. I hope to fully recover soon. Let me live."

The demon met the physician and found out that the thief had been caught and his lost gold recovered. He was happy and he pleaded with the demon to let him live.

By then the demon had grown so hungry that he fell down and swooned away. Then he changed into his human form. The physician's astonishment knew no bound. He brought Ratnakar back to sense and fed him. Ratnakar told him his history and left for his home.

The vampire paused for a moment and then asked in a challenging tone, "O King, Why did the demon refrain from eating the three fellows even after they had grown greedy of life?"



Secondly, how did Ratnakar get back his human form although he had done nothing noble? Answer me if you can. Should you keep mum despite your knowledge of the answer, your head would roll off your neck!"

Forthwith answered King Vikram, "Although Ratnakar had become a demon in form, his nature had not changed.

Being human in nature, he was not inclined to eat human beings. His refraining from eating those three fellows was by itself a noble deed. That is why he got back his normal human form."

No sooner had King Vikram concluded the answer than the vampire, along with the corpse, gave him the slip.



Ironing The Ears

The patient had both his ears badly burnt.

"What happened?" asked the doctor.

"Well," began the man. "My wife was ironing clothes while I was watching the T.V. She put the hot iron near the telephone and when the phone rang I picked up the iron and pressed it to my right ear!"

"But how did your left ear get burnt too?"

"I wanted to call you and picked up—again the same thing!"

WHAT CAME EASY!

Ravi and Vishnu met after greeting twenty years. After each other they sat down for tea at a roadside restaurant.

"Ravi, I must say that you're looking much better and healthier than you looked twenty years ago," said Vishnu.

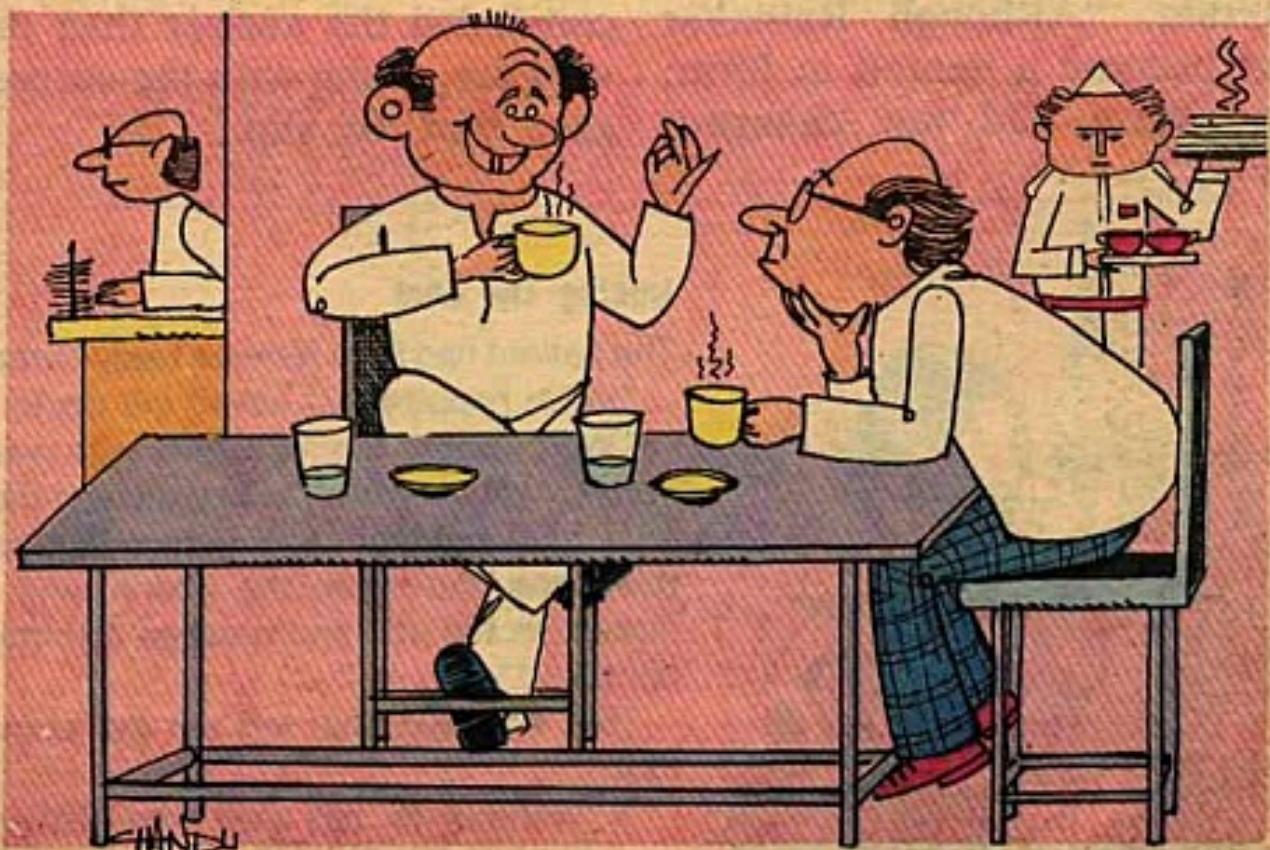
"Yes, it all came during last one year. When you had seen me two decades ago, I was very anxious to find an easy way to grow rich."

"So, you found the way during the last one year, did you?"

"Well, I started a shop twenty years ago but found that it was not easy to run it. Then I launched a transport service. It was not easy either. Thereafter I tried ten other ways. Nothing was easy."

"Then what's the easy thing in which you succeeded recently?"

"Suddenly it struck me that it should be quite easy to change my mind. So I gave up the idea of growing rich!"



A Child Triumphs Over A Scholar

The boy was aged only five, but all who came to know him marvelled at his wit and wisdom. He had been named Yamunait Turaivan.

That was a time when a pundit named Alvan claimed that he was the greatest scholar in the world! Nobody dared to challenge him because the king looked upon him as his guru.

Alvan harassed and humiliated the scholars in many ways. In order to prove his superiority

over them, he made them pay an annual tribute to him just as the king received tax from his subjects.

One day Alvan was passing through the village to which the little boy belonged. The proud man was carried in a palanquin. Drums were beaten and trumpets were blown to announce the famous pundit's journey.

The villagers sat in a meeting on the village square. Everybody disliked Alvan, but he had





to be shown respect as he was the king's guru!

The meeting was interrupted. The people had to get up and give way to the pundit's procession which must pass through the middle of the road and not keep to a side.

But the pundit's procession came to a halt. The little boy stood at the centre of the square. He spread his arms not to allow it to pass!

The villagers had much more respect for the little boy than they had for the pundit. They stood in a semi-circle to see what the boy wanted to do. The drum and trumpet had fallen

silent.

The pundit peeped out and was surprised to see a little boy standing in the way of his procession. He instructed the bearers to lower the palanquin. He then came out and stared at the crowd and the boy. He was surprised.

"What do you want?" he asked the boy.

"You claim to be the wisest of all the scholars. Will you please answer my question? I'll then let you pass," said the boy.

Alvan felt very awkward. But he did not want to appear rude before a crowd. He said, "It is below my dignity to argue with a kid. However, I should be considerate towards you. What is your question?"

The boy stooped and picked up a handful of sand and asked, "How much sand is there in my grip?"

Alvan blinked. How could he count the grains of sand the child held? He felt rather nervous at this unexpected challenge—that too before a crowd.

Observing that the scholar looked quite perplexed, the boy burst into a laugh and said, "Well, pundit, what is there so puzzling about my question?"

Can't you just say that I hold a handful of sand? All right, you can pass!"

The crowd joined the boy in the laughter. The pundit's face grew red. He entered the palanquin in a huff. His drummers and trumpeters took quite some time to resume playing their instruments.

The boy was learning under a Brahmin who was also required to pay tributes to Alvan. But next time when Alvan's man came to realise the tribute, the boy said, "My teacher will no more pay any tribute to Alvan. My teacher is far superior to him in scholarship. I challenge Alvan to an argument with me—in the king's presence!"

Alvan's messenger went back. The king came to learn of the boy's challenge to the great scholar. He grew curious. He asked Alvan to accept the challenge.

There was no other go for Alvan than to face the boy in the court, in the presence of a committee of scholars invited from the neighbouring courts.

But the proud pundit was trembling with rage. He said, "I don't care to put any question to this boy. Let him make some



statement. All I shall do is disprove the statement. I don't want him to pay any penalty when he is defeated. But I must be allowed to strike him on the head with a hammer."

"What if you are defeated?" asked the boy. Alvan was taken aback. He had given no thought to this. "In that case you can hammer me!" he said.

The little boy readily agreed to the condition. Now it was for him to make a statement. He said a line in Sanskrit which meant, "Your mother is not childless; The king is free from sin; the queen is married only to the king."

Alvan stood stupefied. How to disprove this statement? Any effort to do that would amount to say that Alvan was not his mother's child, the king was a sinner, and the queen was also married to someone other than the king!

Now the boy was at liberty to strike on Alvan's head. He of course did not do that, but he asked the proud pundit to give up wearing the symbols of his triumph over other pundits. Thereafter there was no question of Alvan realising tributes from the poor scholars!

The queen had had a bet with the king. She had said that the boy will win while the king had confidently predicted that Alvan will win. Now that the boy won, the queen affectionately embraced him and exclaimed, "Alavandaro"! This

meant, "you are here to rule me!" The boy grew famous as Alavandaro.

Alavandaro was then asked, "Can you disprove your own statement?"

Humbly the boy said, "Yes, by the help of scriptures. Now, the scriptures say that a mother who had only one child was as good as childless. Alvan is the only child of his mother. Secondly, however pure and pious a king may be, the burden of the sins of his subjects is borne by him. That is why no king can be free from sins. Thirdly, those who follow the marriage rites know that a bride is first wedded to five gods like Agni and Indra. That contradicts my statement that the queen was married only to the king!"

There was applause again.





STORY OF INDIA- KRISHNA KUMARI

Udaipur in Rajasthan, ruled by the Maharanas, was a kingdom with a glorious past. We are speaking of a time when Maharana Bhim Singh was the king of this land of the Rajputs. Udaipur had by then grown up into a lovely city.

And the lovely city prided in its lovely princess, Krishna Kumari, daughter of the Maharana. She was called the "Flower of Rajasthan" for her beauty. The people of Udaipur loved her because she was extremely sweet in nature.

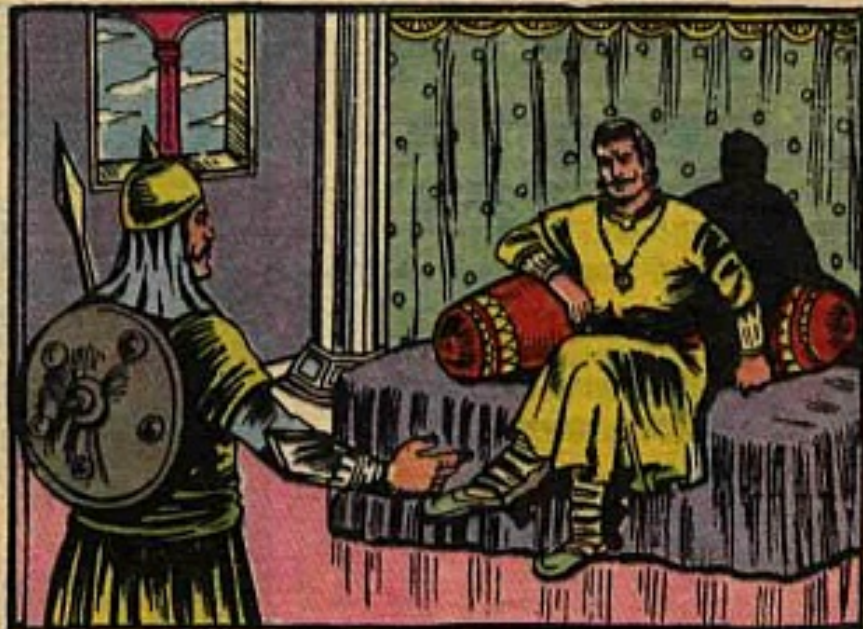


Jagat Singh, the ruler of Jaipur, desired to marry the princess. His messenger met the Maharana and put forth the proposal. The Maharana promised to convey his decision very soon. He wished to discuss the proposal with his queen and ministers.



Soon thereafter a battle was fought between Jagat Singh and Man Singh, the ruler of Marwar. Man Singh claimed that Jagat Singh was defeated by him. Jagat Singh did not admit of any defeat. Both became deadly enemies of each other.

After the battle Man Singh's messenger met the Maharana of Udaipur and said, "Our King, Man Singh, proposes to marry Princess Krishna Kumari. You will surely prefer our heroic king to Jagat Singh who was badly beaten in the battle!"



The Maharana and his queen were in a fix. Both Jagat Singh and Man Singh were powerful kings. One whose proposal will be rejected will become a foe of Udaipur. At that time Udaipur was in no position to offer proper resistance to any attack.

Man Singh, the ruler of Marwar, had a friend in Nawab Amir Khan. He counselled Man Singh to insist on demanding the hand of the princess of Udaipur. Man Singh was inspired. He sent messenger after messenger to the Maharana.



Amir Khan met the Maharana on Man Singh's behalf and told him that Udaipur will be destroyed unless the princess was married to Man Singh. "We don't mind if you kill the princess. But Jagat Singh must not marry her!" he said.

Princess Krishna Kumari heard of the great dilemma of her parents. The jolly princess grew sad. She did not want Udaipur to be destroyed for her sake. Her parents had stopped talking to her. But what was her fault?





Time was running out. Both Jagat Singh and Man Singh were getting ready to march upon Udaipur to take the princess away forcibly. There was panic in the city. Anxiety was writ large on the faces of the members of the royal family.

One night the princess was lying awake. In the dim light of the lamp, she saw a figure approaching her—with a sword in hand. "Uncle!" she cried out. The sword fell off the hand of Jawandas, a cousin of the Maharana. He ran away.



The princess understood that Jawandas had been asked to kill her because her death alone will change the situation. She asked for poison. Her maids brought it to her. With a sad smile she drank it. She gave her life to save her family and her city.



Unsolved Mysteries

Some believe that there is a civilisation at the centre of the earth that sends the flying saucers!

Is There A Nether World?

“**T**hey were giants, but they were friendly and we lived there for two years,” said a Norwegian sailor, Olaf Samsen.

He and his father had mysteriously disappeared for a period. The father died while returning to Norway when their boat collided with an iceberg. The young Olaf had strange tales to recount. He and his father had somehow entered a nether-world. The residents of that world lived long, their average longevity being 500 years! Olaf's account was recorded by a young journalist named W.G. Emerson in a fascinating book, *The Smoky God*.

Was Olaf the only man to believe in the existence of a nether-world? No, since times immemorial there have been people in all the ages who believed that unknown to the humanity living on the surface of

the earth, there is a civilisation in the interior of the earth.

Somewhere there is an opening on the surface of the earth that can lead one into that civilisation. The climate of that world is naturally different from ours, but it is most pleasant. Some kind of light shines there and the beings who live there do not know war or any sort of conflict.

The Hindu mythology has said much about the existence of *Patala* or the nether-world; modern man has taken that to be mere imagination. But from time to time strange witnesses—all from the western hemisphere—turn up to say that there

is indeed a nether-world!

It was Plato, the celebrated Greek philosopher, who had spoken of that world. Meagre was the knowledge of the earth during Plato's time and we can dismiss his theory as fantasy. But what about Lord Edward Bulwar Lytton's *The Coming Race* published in 1871? He speaks of a young man who fell into a tunnel while exploring a mine and arrived at a new world!

Even Bulwar Lytton's work may be branded as pure fantasy. But William Reed's book *Phantom of the Poles*, published in 1906, is a scientific study of the theory. He concludes, "The



earth is hollow... There are openings at the northern and the southern extremities. In the interior are vast continents, oceans, mountains and rivers. Vegetable and animal life are evident in this new world and it is probably peopled by races unknown to dwellers on the Earth's surface."

Very little has been so far known about the North and the South poles. There are observers who think that the wonderful lights that can be seen in the Arctic regions, known as Aurora Borealis, are nothing but the reflection of the kind of 'Sun' that lights the region at the centre of the earth!

Another interesting work on the subject is *A Journey to the Earth's Interior* by Marshall B.

Gardner.

It is widely believed that Rear Admiral Richard E. Byrd of the U.S. Navy, who explored the Arctic and the Antarctic Poles in 1947 and 1956, had seen something strange. His reports have been kept a secret. He died rather suddenly in 1957 and it is alleged that even his personal diary was taken away.

There are observers who think that what we see as the flying saucers are not things sent by any planet from the space, but by this nether-world civilisation. Out of the Poles they emerge and disappear into them!

The beings of the nether-world may not be human beings; they may be supernatural creatures—some think.





HOW THEY UNDERSTOOD EACH OTHER

If a traveller sought temporary shelter in a Buddhist monastery in Japan of olden days, it was customary for him to make some comment on the Buddha. Any one of the monks gave a reply. An argument followed. If the traveller lost in the argument, then he was not granted shelter. But that gener-

ally did not happen.

It was heavily raining. A tired traveller knocked on the door of a monastery. A one-eyed monk opened the door. The traveller was too tired to speak. He showed one finger. The one-eyed monk showed two fingers. At that the traveller showed three fingers. The monk then



showed his fist.

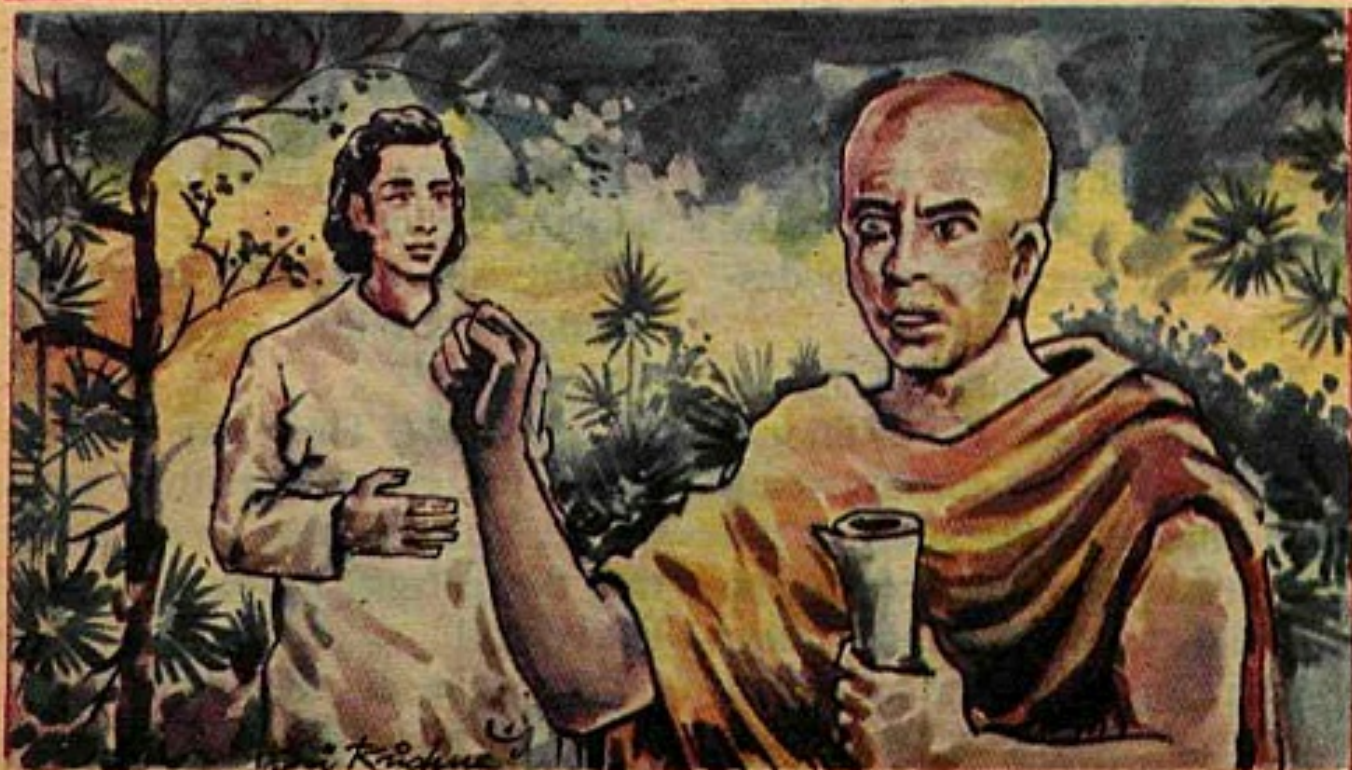
The traveller left the monastery and sought shelter in an inn. The inn-keeper asked him, "Did you not fare well in the argument?"

The traveller replied, "No. I showed one finger to mean that the Buddha was the only refuge." The monk showed two fingers to say that the Buddha and his teachings were both equally important. I showed three fingers to mean that the Buddha, his teachings and those who followed his teachings were all equally important. At that the monk showed his fist—to say that all the three were in fact one! I knew that I was defeated.

So I left."

The traveller resumed his journey in the morning. The inn-keeper happened to meet the one-eyed monk. "How did you refuse shelter to a traveller in a rainy night?"

"I should have thrashed him. He is lucky that he escaped!" commented the monk. Then he explained, "The fellow showed one finger to point out that I had only one eye! I did not mind his rudeness. I showed two fingers to say that at least he had two eyes! At that he showed three fingers to indicate that between we two we had only three eyes! That angered me. I clenched my fist. The fellow ran away."





THE LIAR AND THE TRUTHFUL

To the south of the kingdom of Sompur was a wide forest. For ages the forest influenced the climate of the kingdom. It ensured good rain and that resulted in good crop.

But it was observed that the forest was growing thinner. It was because the human locality had spread very close to it. The people depended on the forest not only for fuel but also for timber for building houses, boats etc. They were not doing anything to add new trees to the forest, but were going on destroying it.

The king prohibited felling trees in the forest. His order was announced in the locality more than once. But the villagers did not pay any serious attention to it. They went on felling trees.

The king appointed an officer to arrest anybody who was

found felling trees. The officer camped near the forest.

One day he found a young man raising his axe to fell a tree.

"You daredevil chap! Are you ignorant of the law against felling trees?" demanded the officer.

"Truly, sir, I was not aware of any such law," replied the young man. "I'm new to this place."

"Aware or not, you must be penalised for breach of law," said the officer.

"But, sir, did I not see five woodcutters felling trees a furlong away?"

"So what? They pay me a rupee for every tree they cut down. You can also go on cutting down trees if you pay me like them!"

"Say that, sir, say that! You had almost scared me to death

quite unnecessarily," said the young man heaving a sigh of relief.

He continued to fell trees paying the officer at the rate of a rupee for every tree. A fortnight passed.

One day the officer met the young man and said, "Henceforth you must pay two rupees for every tree!"

"How can I, sir? On the average I get only two rupees out of every tree I sell. If I give you the whole amount, with what can I live?" asked the young man.

"I don't care whether you live or not. Either agree to my demand or let us go to the king!"

"Well, sir, lead me to the king."

The officer was taken aback, for he had not imagined that the young man will so easily agree to go to the king! Now he had no other go than to accompany him to the royal court.

"Think once again. Are you ready to take the punishment the king will give you? Still there is time to go back," the officer said on the way.

"Since we are already out, let



me not be deprived of having a glimpse of the king," said the young man gravely. Now he had begun to suspect the officer.

They appeared before the king. "My lord, this young man was felling trees illegally," reported the officer.

At once the young man said, "My lord, I was doing so for the first time. May I be pardoned."

"Shut up, you liar! Were you not felling trees for a fortnight past?" asked the officer excitedly.

The young man smiled. Looking at the king, he said, "My lord, kindly ask this truthful gentleman why he did not arrest



me for last fifteen days!"

The king looked at the officer quizzically. The officer grew pale. That made the king suspicious. At once he sent some sepoy to the forest. They rounded up about a dozen peo-

ple who were felling trees and brought them to the king's presence. They all confessed to bribing the officer.

The officer was sent to gaol. The young man was put in charge of the forest.

WONDER WITH COLOURS



PHOTO CAPTION CONTEST



P.V. Subramanian



M.C. Morabad

Can you formulate a caption in a few words, to suit these pictures related to each other? If yes, you may write it on a post card and mail to Photo Caption Contest, Chandamama, to reach us by 20th of the current month. A reward of Rs.50/- will go to the best entry which will be published in the issue after the next.

The Prize for November '83 goes to:—

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The Winning Entry:—'Curious Feline' & 'Knowledge is Divine'

PICKS FROM THE WISE

"Better a diamond with a flaw than a pebble without."

—Chinese proverb

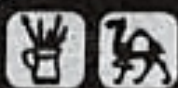
"A pig bought on credit is forever grunting."

—Spanish proverb

"Some men go through a forest and see no firewood."

—English proverb

No Entry Fee



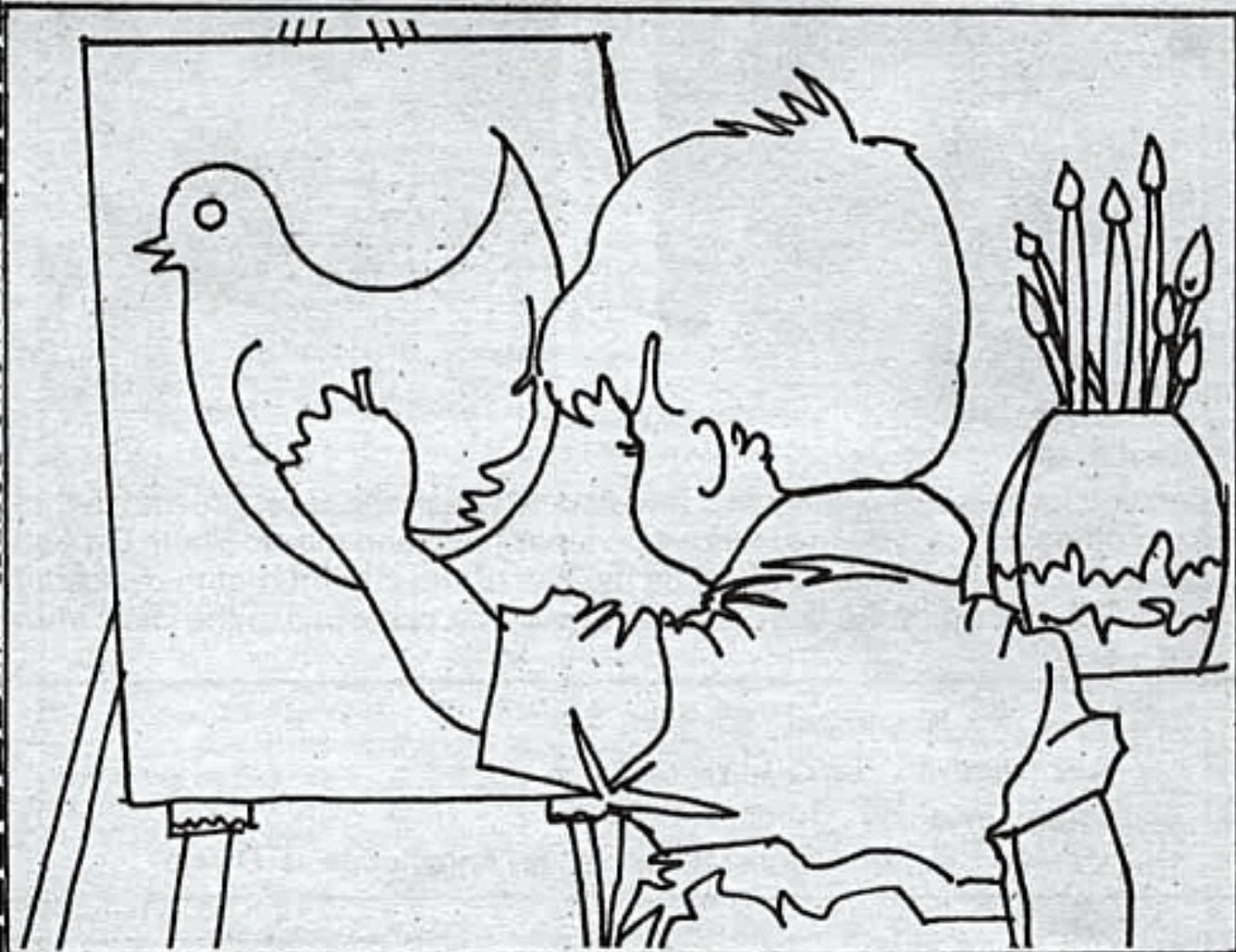
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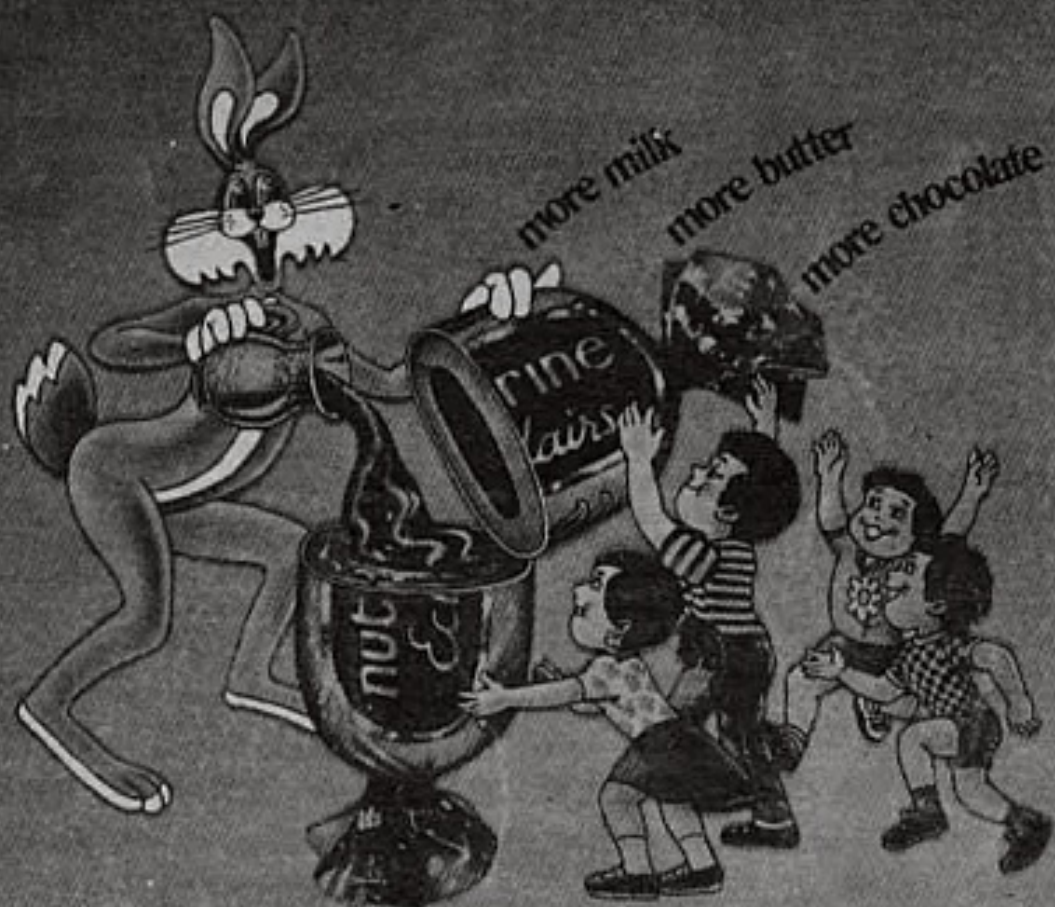
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